

Come On, Open the Door
Acts 12:12-25

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I. Doubting answered prayers. Acts 12:12-16

Some commentators say that it would have been customary for a young teenage _____ to be assigned to answer the door, and that Rhoda was probably around 12-13 years old.

- **1 Timothy 2:8, I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and _____.** NKJV

The LORD, in His _____ and according to His own sovereign plan, answers every one of our prayers. The answers vary according to His will - sometimes yes, no, or wait.

II. Go and tell. Acts 12:17-19

James in **Acts 12:17** does not refer to James the son of Zebedee, who was martyred, but rather it refers to the _____ of Jesus, who was one of the leaders of the early church.

- The fact that James was a leader in the Church is another proof that we serve a God of "_____" chances; even someone who denied the Lord can later be used in the ministry. **John 7:2-5**

Even if Herod believed that the LORD had done this miracle, either because of _____ or to save face with the religious leaders, he did not admit that the LORD showed up to help Peter.

III. Give God the glory. Acts 12:20-25.

Tyre and Sidon did not like the idea of a conflict with Herod, so they sent some ambassadors to Herod to make _____ with him.

- *"When he had been quite worn out by the pain in his belly for five days, he _____ this life."* (Antiquities, XIX.8.2)

After the LORD judged Herod, notice what happened with the Church: **"But the word of God grew and _____."**

IV. Practical Application.

We must always be available and remain sensitive to the _____ of the Holy Spirit so we can fulfill His will and purpose in life.

- If we don't hear about answered prayers, they can sometimes surprise us that God answered. When we _____ these truths, God's answers to our prayers might catch us off guard.

Just as Peter was knocking on the door wanting in, Jesus is knocking on your heart, wanting a _____ with you.

Small Group Discussion

Looking back at your notes from this week's sermon, was there anything that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

1. Read **Acts 12:12-16**. When the people at Mary's house heard Peter was at the door, they didn't believe it. Discuss the five points from the sermon explaining why we are sometimes surprised by answered prayers:
 1. We haven't studied enough of what the Bible has to say about answered prayer.
 2. We fail to understand how the LORD invites us to boldly come before His throne.
 3. We have prayed for something for a long time, but the LORD has not answered yet.
 4. Knowing we are not perfect, we start to believe the LORD will not answer.
 5. Sometimes we don't hear about answered prayers from other people we have prayed for.

Titus 3:5, Hebrews 4:16, James 1:17

2. Read **Acts 12:17-19**. What James was mentioned here? What does that reveal about the nature of God's forgiveness? Why did Herod have the prison guards put to death?

Proverbs 16:18, John 7:2-5, James 4:6

3. Read **Acts 12:20-23**. Why did the LORD allow Herod to drop dead? What was Herod's biggest sin?

Psalms 37:12-13, Romans 11:36, 1 Corinthians 10:31, 2 Timothy 4:5, Revelation 14:7

4. Read **Acts 12:24-25**. What was the final result of the persecution that happened during **Acts 12**? What can we learn about persecution and God's will from **Acts 12**?

Psalms 23:4, Matthew 5:10-12, Matthew 11:28, Romans 8:38-39

5. Discuss the Practical Application of the sermon.

Job 42:2, Psalm 115:1, Romans 2:24